

**Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
District of Rhode Island**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, February 4, 2020

Providence Man Pleads Guilty in Bogus Check, Bank Fraud Scheme

PROVIDENCE – A Providence man admitted on Monday to participating in a conspiracy to defraud area banks by depositing bogus checks and then, working with others, to quickly withdraw the funds before banks discovered that the checks were fraudulent.

Edmilson Rodrigues, 21, of Providence, admitted that he participated in a scheme to duplicate “real checks” provided to members of the conspiracy by insiders at local law firms, social services agencies, and local colleges.

According to information presented to the court, the bogus checks were deposited by Rodrigues and others into actual bank accounts at bank branch offices in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. As part of the scheme, Rodrigues and others quickly withdrew the funds, at times using stolen bank account and personal identifying information, before the bank determined that the deposited checks were bogus.

According to court documents, an investigation by Providence Police Detectives, the United States Secret Service, and the FBI determined that on at least eighteen occasions between May 2013 and February 2019, members of the conspiracy deposited bogus checks and withdrew funds, defrauding banks of well over \$100,000. Rodrigues acknowledged that he joined the conspiracy in June 2017, depositing bogus checks and then either withdrawing the funds or having others do so at his direction.

Appearing on Monday before U.S. District Court Judge William E. Smith, Edmilson Rodrigues pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit bank fraud and three counts of bank fraud, announced United States Attorney Aaron L. Weisman, Providence Police Chief Hugh T. Clements, Jr., Craig A. Marech, Resident Agent in Charge of the Providence Office of the United States Secret Service, and Special Agent in Charge of the FBI Boston Division Joseph R. Bonavolonta.

Rodrigues is scheduled to be sentenced on May 8, 2020.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney William J. Ferland.